



Zoos have benefits but also cause unseen sustainability problems.

#### Matrix Post: Zoos

Zoos provide and promote many good things: exposure exotic animals, research of animals, conservation efforts, etc. It is a way to experience a different environment and have fun while doing it. Though zoos create positive outlets, there are some unsustainable aspects of zoos. Three major sustainability problems zoos suffer are environmental, economical, and social.

The environmental problems seen by zoos are waste control and environmental enrichment. Having a large amount of animals in one location, there is a greater need for maintenance to clean their waste. The animal's natural environment can be simulated, but cannot sustain itself like the animal's actual habitat. If it were, than waste and food would not be a concern. Something associated with this is environmental enrichment. Written in a report about easing stress in zoo animals, "environmental enrichment involves the practice of increasing the physical, social and temporal complexity of captive environments" (Carlstead, 337). Though environmental enrichment can benefit zoo animals, it does not compare to the natural environment of the animals. Thus, with waste and inability to recreate whole habitats, zoos are environmentally unsustainable.

Secondly, zoos are unsustainable economically because of cost to maintain them. During times of recession, zoos are typically hindered because it takes many people to uphold a zoo and when there is less revenue coming in, there is not enough for workers. To be economically sustainable, zoos must insure that the surrounding community will contribute to it, otherwise it too costly and unsustainable.

Lastly, zoos face numerous social concerns which in turn make them unsustainable. One criticism is how zoo animals are treated. In modern zoos, there are protective measures to insure that animals are treated well, but even with those in place, placing in animal in a habitat that is not its own is unfair in some cases. Besides this, there are also social perceptions which benefit society and euthanize

animals. There are news articles describing zoo animals harming humans. Most of these articles favor humans and then blaming animals. The common problem with these events is that animals are not used to humans and react as they would in nature. Socially, there are perceptions and handling of animals that make zoos unsustainable.

Zoos do have benefits to humans for jobs and opportunities to help animals. They help raise awareness of animal extinction and how humans interact with animals. Though, there are problems environmentally, economically, and socially that could benefit zoos and make them more sustainable.

#### Works Cited

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